

**To:** charlowl@cox.net[Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy]; 'William Miller'[William.H.Miller@usace.army.mil]; 'Sallie Diebolt'[Sallie.Diebolt@usace.army.mil]; Brush, Jason[Brush.Jason@epa.gov]; 'Scott Richardson'[Scott\_Richardson@fws.gov]; 'Christina McVie'[Cmcvie@Tucsonaudubon.org]; 'Friends of the San Pedro'[FSPR@sanpedroriver.org]; ROBERT BEHRSTOCK[Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy]  
**From:** Robert A. Behrstock  
**Sent:** Thur 6/11/2015 12:31:15 AM  
**Subject:** Villages (PILLAGES) at Vigneto

Dear Friends,

First, I'd like to thank Pam & Charlie Corrado for including us in their letter to various officials.

I write this note as a biologist who has been working in ecotourism since 1980, an 11-year resident of Hereford, and someone who lives in a house. I am not fundamentally opposed to houses. When I first read about the proposed *Villages at Vigneto* development, my response was probably the same as all of yours: "What?" really "What?" 27,760 homes in the desert...with golf courses, vineyards and orchards? Seventy thousand new residents? What twisted reality do these people inhabit? Two hundred years ago--sure, why not? Pre-Tucson, pre-Phoenix, pre-Las Vegas, pre-Sierra Vista, pre-cattle, pre-cotton, pre-drought. No problem. Build a dam and catch that water. But hey, those days are over. The water is caught.

Reality check: There are at least 14 rivers flowing through Tuscany, the land *Villages at Vigneto* is modeled after. They're fed by upwards of 40 inches of rain per year. Go to Benson now and look at the San Pedro River. It's a sandy wash, not a lush teat to be sucked by 70,000 new residents.

The Salt, Verde, and Colorado rivers (the latter's rainfall varying by up to 50%/year) all fail to supply an adequate amount of water for the cities they're 'supposed' to supply. The San Pedro River, hammered by development in Sierra Vista and on the Hereford flats, is incapable of keeping up with current demands, much less another 27,700 houses. Obtaining water from 'elsewhere' is no longer an option because

'elsewhere' is already using the water. You can't suck on both ends of a straw at the same time. Dare you count on your neighbors for cooperation conserving water? Look at a Google Earth view of this area. Count the uncovered swimming pools, each losing 10,000 gallons or more per year to evaporation. Add 20 or 30,000 new ones each year for Phoenix and Tucson. Now there's some water you can forget about right now. How many low flow toilets does that represent? How many 50-gallon rain barrels? Supposedly, the 1980 Groundwater Management Act (GMA) limits the pumping of groundwater and prohibits subdivision development and constructions unless a supply of renewable water has documented for the next 100 years. As we all know, there is no way a 100 year supply of water can be guaranteed--much less even envisioned--for a 27,700 unit subdivision in Benson.

Perhaps when babies are burning up in their cribs because there's no water for putting out house fires, the developers will get the point. Is that a risk we're willing to take?

Of course, El Dorado Benson, LLC, the developers of *Villages at Vigneto* may be envisioning another end game. Surely, they must be taking into account the Maricopa Superior Court Judge's ruling against Castle and Cooke's 7,000 home *Tribute* development on the east side of Sierra Vista. *Tribute* was going into a city that *already* had hospitals, grocery stores, schools, police and fire stations, and the rest of the usual urban amenities. Nonetheless, the Judge ruled against it because of water concerns. *Tribute* was designed to utilize all that remained of Sierra Vista's land that could be developed east of town. "Excuse me; may I have all the pie for myself?" Now, consider a proposal to build 27,700 homes and supporting infrastructure on the creosote-covered plains of Benson. Would El Dorado Benson, LLC knowingly propose an environmental disaster without a Plan B? Would they back pedal and settle for half the project...or a third. But really, will there be water for 10,000 new houses or even 5,000? Do we really want or need a

bedroom community of Tucson to be built in Benson? Did you move here to live in a Tucson suburb? Will the *Villages of Vigneto* slowly spread south on 90, engulfing the open space between Interstate 10 and Sierra Vista? Or will it slowly creep eastward to Willcox?

I would have been so happy to see a proposal for a low water community with rainwater harvesting, xeriscape yards, and all manners of water conservation tactics in place. To propose a development with golf courses, orchards, and vineyards is an affront to everyone's intelligence. I suggest the *Villages at Vigneto* plan be subjected to a massive reorganization, aligning it with the philosophy of living in the desert for spiritual gain, not simply plundering the desert for financial gain.

Best to all, and with the future in mind,

Bob Behrstock

Robert A. Behrstock

## **Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy**

Birdlife of Houston, Galveston, and the Upper Texas Coast

<http://www.tamupress.com/product/Birdlife-of-Houston-Galveston-and-the-Upper-Texa,356.aspx>

Finding Birds on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail

<http://www.tamupress.com/product/Finding-Birds-on-the-Great-Texas-Coastal-Birding-T,709.aspx>

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